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| **URBAN POLITICS & POLICY** | |
| Sociology: SOC 27400 - B  City College of New York  Spring 2019  Mon/Wed- 9:30-10:45PM  Classroom: NAC 7/219 | Instructor: Nga Than  Office: NAC – 6/123  Office Hours: Wednesdays, 11AM-12PM, and by appointment  Email: [nthan@ccny.cuny.edu](mailto:nthan@ccny.cuny.edu)  Backup email: [nthan@gradcenter.cuny.edu](mailto:nthan@gradcenter.cuny.edu) |

**COURSE DISCRIPTION**

This course examines changing American cities with a focus on New York City. Beginning with an overview of urban theories, we explore the impact of economic, political, demographic and social trends on our cities; then examine several contested policy issues such as affordable housing, economic development, redevelopment, immigration, education and/or welfare. How and why have national problems become identified as "urban" problems? Is the city a viable problem-solving unit? What are the respective roles of public and private sectors? We will address these questions through critical reading, discussion and writing.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Familiarity with major themes in urban sociology such as residential segregation, enclaves, gentrification, the ghetto, enclaves and neighborhoods.

Critical analysis of reading materials.

Formulating sociological questions and addressing them on the basis of evidence.

Researching and writing about a topic of particular interest to the student.

**REQUIRED TEXTBOOK:**

Harding, A., & Blokland, T. (2014). *Urban theory: a critical introduction to power, cities and urbanism in the 21st century*. Sage.

**OPTIONAL MONOGRAPHS:**

Desmond, M. (2016). *Evicted: Poverty and profit in the American city*. Crown

Jacobs, J. (2016). *The death and life of great American cities*. Vintage.

*\*Other readings should be uploaded to a Google Drive folder because Blackboard doesn’t allow scanned copies to be uploaded.*

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

**Grades:**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Item | Date | Weight (%) |
| Class participation/Attendance |  | 15.0 |
| Census tract report | Feb 20th | 5.0 |
| Photo essay | March 06th | 5.0 |
| 5 online reading responses | Various Due Dates  *Due at 6PM the day prior to the class* | 15.0 |
| Midterm | March 18th | 20.0 |
| Research Paper | May 6th | 20.0 |
| Final Exam | May 13th | 20.0 |

The grading system in this class is as follows:

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| A | 93-100 |
| A- | 90-92 |
| B+ | 87-89 |
| B | 83-86 |
| B- | 80-82 |
| C+ | 76-79 |
| C | 74-75 |
| C- | 70-73 |
| D | 60-69 |
| F | <59 |

**Attendance/ class participation**

Regular attendance is one of the most important parameters to successful completion of the course requirements. If you miss more than 4 meetings, you will not receive an attendance grade. In any case, inform me if you have to miss any class.

Each student must read the course materials before they attend class and I expect them to participate in discussion. Class participation in the form of informed questions and comments will be taken into consideration when determining your final grade.

**Communication with students**

Communication about class matters will be provided in class, by email and on Blackboard. You are responsible for all communications, i.e. attending class, checking your CCNY email and Blackboard for any announcements of information. It is very important that you keep up with your CCNY email and use Blackboard regularly.

**ASSIGNMENTS**

**Census Tract Report**

Through this assignment, you will get a sense of what your neighborhood (census tract) demographically looks like as compared to the United States, New York City, New York State/New Jersey, and your borough. If you don’t live in New York City, you can pick another region for comparison. In about five pages, you should be able to summarize different demographic variables such as total population, population density, household size, educational attainment for population, cumulative educational attainment, median family income, average family income, and nativity by citizenship status. The information you learn could provide a basis to generate a research question for your final paper. More detail of this assignment will be provided on Blackboard. It’s due on **Feb 20th, 2019.**

**Photo Essay**

You can use your smartphone, or any digital camera to take picture of an urban issue such as inequality in the city, affordable housing, the tech industry, gentrification, suburbanization, revitalization, etc. In addition, you should write an analysis of the issue you want to raise, what the causes and consequences of the problem are, and what theoretical concept can you apply to analyze the problem. Apply one sociological concept that you have learned to analyze the social problem you have captured. By the mid-term exam, we will have a class to showcase the entire class pictures, and we can analyze various problems using concepts from urban sociology to tell your urban stories. This picture could also be incorporated into your final research paper of a particular topic that you are interested in. The due date is **March 06, 2019.**

**Online reading responses**

There are **FIVE** online reading responses that you are required to submit via Blackboard. You should read the reading materials, synthesize the readings, see how the authors communicate with each other, and what questions they raise, and what your responses to those questions are. A discussion board will be set up on Blackboard where you can discuss with your classmates over the topic of the week. You can comment and respond to each other summaries, comments, responses, and criticisms of the readings. The due dates vary. You can choose **FIVE** sets of readings that you are most interested in to write response to. You also need to sign up to present **ONE** set of the readings in class. You might want to look at what your classmates write about the readings on the discussion board on Blackboard prior to our class meeting.

**Midterm Exam and Final Exam**

The exams are scheduled on **March 18th,** and **May 13th, 2019**. Most questions will be taken from a list of questions distributed in advance. The exams will be composed of multiple-choice questions, identification questions, and one long essay question. Exams are not cumulative. They will cover all materials learned since the previous exam. Additional information about the exams will be provided in class two weeks prior to the exams.

**Final Research Paper**

You will write a paper of 7-8 pages on a topic of your choice. Your paper should address a well-defined question. You should email me your possible research topic by the end of the 8th week of the semester. That is to say, the due date is March 23rd, 2019. You can also make an appointment to discuss a possible research topic with me during that week. On April 6th, you should hand in a paragraph explaining your research topic, including your consideration of the questions that you will address, and a working bibliography of maximum 8 references. If you would like to receive my comments on your first draft, I will read it as long as you send it to me TWO weeks before the due date. The final draft of the paper is due on May 6th. Please document your paper with footnotes or endnotes using APA or MLA styles.

You will receive your final paper back on the final day of class, May 13th.

Grading of research papers. To receive an “A,” a paper must be excellent in the following three areas.

1. Research and demonstrated knowledge. The paper should cite a good range of quality scholarly sources and demonstrate depth of knowledge based on working with these sources.
2. Organization and argument. The paper should address the assigned topic, present a well-supported argument, and draw appropriate conclusions.
3. Writing and documentation. The paper should be clearly and correctly written, and footnotes and bibliography should be complete and correct.

To receive a grade in the “B” range, a paper must be good in at least two of the three areas.

**STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC HONESTY**

As a member of this class, you are part of both the City College of New York Community and a larger community of social scientists. You have joined two communities that are devoted to sharing and creating knowledge. This process depends, however, on the intellectual honor and correct scholarly techniques of everyone involved. Always acknowledge the sources of ideas and information. Borrowing even a sentence or two from someone else’s work without proper citation is plagiarism. As you conduct your research, be scrupulous in noting and attributing your sources. The reader of your paper should be able to retrace the steps that you took in carrying out your research. We will discuss this further in class, but, by all means, see me if you have questions. No notes or books or any kind may be consulted during the midterm and final exams

**PLEASE READ CAREFULLY!**

**AccessAbility Center**

If you require accommodation for special learning needs during class or exam periods, please bring me a letter from the AccessAbility Center providing instructions as to what kinds of accommodations you require. You should do this within the first two weeks of the semester to make sure that I can accommodate your needs. Please visit the AccessAbility Center at: <https://www.ccny.cuny.edu/accessability/>

**Coming late to class:** If you are late to class, please do not disturb your classmates. Please do not send email or call me regarding your tardiness.

**Laptop and cellphone policy:** Please turn your cellphone off before you come to class. If you use your cellphone or laptop for personal reasons, please leave the classroom first.

***There will be no make-up exams or assignments.***If you have a medical or similar emergency which prevents you from appearing for an exam, you must contact me immediately following that emergency to request “exceptional circumstances”. Late assignments will receive a half grade deduction for every day beyond the due date. No make-up assignments will be accepted unless you have a medical or similar emergency that can be documented. Exceptions will be considered only on a case-by-case basis; therefore, you must talk to me if you have a problem that needs to be addressed. Ten percent of students' grades will also take into account participation and attendance.

**Extra Resources**

Get to know the research librarians at CCNY, they are extremely nice, and helpful.

If you have any question regarding to your major/minor requirement, please contact Ms. Laura Bowman (NAC 6/125).

If you have any question pertaining to the course materials, assignments, please contact me at [nthan@gradcenter.cuny.edu](mailto:nthan@gradcenter.cuny.edu)

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

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| **Date** | **Topic** | **Reading** | **Assignments** |
| Week 1  (01/27-02/2) | Introduction  What is urban sociology? |  | Introduction  Course requirements  Pre-course Survey |
| Chapter 1 – What is Urban Theory (Google Drive) |  |
| Week 2  (02/03-02/09) | The Chicago School & Urban Ecology | Chapter 2 (Pp. 23-28) (Google Drive)  Wirth, L. (1938). Urbanism as a Way of Life. *American journal of sociology*, *44*(1), 1-24. (Google Drive) | What is urbanism? |
| Chapter 2 (Pp. 29-37) (Google Drive)  Christenson, J. A. (1984). Gemeinschaft and gesellschaft: Testing the spatial and communal hypotheses. *Social Forces*, *63*(1), 160-168. (Google Drive) | Gemeinschaft vs. Gesellschaft (Community vs. Society)  **Online Response 1** |
| Week 3  (02/10-02/16) | Critics of the Chicago School | Chapter 2 (Pp. 38-53) (Google Drive)  Castells, Manuel. 1972. *The Urban Question: A Marxist Approach (Ch. 5)* |  |
| Harvey, David. 1973. *Social Justice and the City* (Ch. 2) (Google Drive) | **Online Response 2** |
| Week 4  (02/17-02/23) | **NO CLASS on Monday, Feb 18 – Presidents Day** | | |
| Globalization & The City | Chapter 3 (pp. 56-74)  Jacobs, J. (2016). *The death and life of great American cities*. Vintage. (Introduction – Google Drive)  Documentary: *Citizen Jane: Battle for the City (2017)* | **Census Tract Assignment Due (BB)** |
| Week 5  (02/24-03/02) | Globalization & The City (Continued) | Chapter 3 (pp. 74-88)  Glaeser, E. (2011). “Why do cities decline?” In *Triumph of the city: How urban spaces make us human*. Pan Macmillan. (Google Drive) | **Online Response 4** |
| Urban Political Economy | Chapter 4 (pp.88 – 97) |  |
| Week 6 (03/03-03/09) | Urban Political Economy(continued)  Growth Machine vs. Urban Regime Theory  New Urban Sociology | Chapter 4 (pp.97 – 120)  Zukin, S. (1980). A decade of the new urban sociology. *Theory and Society*, *9*(4), 575-601.  Students receive mid-term guide | **Online Response 5** |
| Spatial inequalities | Chapter 5 (pp.120-131) | **Photo Essay Due (March 06) (BB)** |
| Week 7  (03/10-03/16) | Residential Segregation  Suburbanization | Chapter 5 (pp. 131- 140)  Wilson, W. J. (2012). *The truly disadvantaged: The inner city, the underclass, and public policy*. University of Chicago Press. Pp. 3-20 (BB)  Massey, D. S., & Denton, N. A. (1993). *American apartheid: Segregation and the making of the underclass*. Harvard University Press. Pp. 1-17 (BB) | **Online Response 6** |
| Chapter 5 (pp. 140-145)  Midterm Q&A |  |
| Week 8  (03/17-03/23) | **In Class Midterm Exam – March 18** | | |
| Gentrification | Chapter 5 (pp. 145-150)  Freeman, L. (2011). *There goes the hood: Views of gentrification from the ground up*. Temple University Press. Chapter 1 (Google Drive) | **Online Response 7**  **Research Topic Due (Blackboard)** |
| Week 9  (03/24-03/30) | The Ghetto  Neighborhood Effects | Chapter 5 (pp. 150 – 160)  Duneier, M. (2016). *Ghetto: The Invention of a Place, the History of an Idea*. Preface, Chapter 1 | **Online Response 8** |
| Chapter 5 (pp.160-171)  Sampson, R. J. (2006). Collective efficacy theory: Lessons learned and directions for future inquiry. *Taking stock: The status of criminological theory*, *15*, 149-167. | **Online Response 9** |
| Week 10  (03/31-04/06) | Culture & the City | Chapter 6 (pp. 171-176)  Scott, A. J. (1997). The cultural economy of cities. *International journal of urban and regional research*, *21*(2), 323-339. |  |
| Chapter 6 (pp. 178-185)  Jerolmack, C. (2013).  “Joey’s Brooklyn Pet Shop” in The *global pigeon*. University of Chicago Press. | **Online Response 10**  **Research Prospectus Due (BB)** |
| Week 11  (04/07-04/13) | Culture & the City (Continued)  Creative City | Florida, R. (2014). *The rise of the creative class--revisited: Revised and expanded*. Basic Books (AZ). (pp.1-35) |  |
| Florida, R. (2014). *The rise of the creative class--revisited: Revised and expanded*. Basic Books (AZ). (pp.35-65)  Critique of Richard Florida  The Guardian. “Richard Florida isn’t Sorry” <https://www.theguardian.com/cities/2017/oct/26/gentrification-richard-florida-interview-creative-class-new-urban-crisis> | **Online Response 11** |
| Week 12  (04/14-04/20) | Public Space (Continued) | Chapter 6 (p.185-217) | **Online Response 12** |
| Duneier, M., & Carter, O. (1999). *Sidewalk*. Macmillan. Pp. 3-43 (Google Drive) |  |
| Week 13  (04/21-04/27) | **No Class – Spring Recess** | | |
| Week 14  (04/28-05/04) | New Urban Problems  Eviction  Tech & the City | Desmond, M. (2016). *Evicted: Poverty and profit in the American city*. | Book Discussion |
| Curbed New York: “Amazon’s H2Q with New York, explained” <https://ny.curbed.com/2018/11/16/18098589/amazon-hq2-nyc-queens-long-island-city-explained>  Students receive final exam guide |  |
| Week 15  (05/05-05/11) | Tech & the City (Continued)  Urban Theory Reconsidered | Airbnb vs. New York City  Ravenelle, A. J. (2017). Sharing economy workers: selling, not sharing. *Cambridge Journal of Regions, Economy and Society*, *10*(2), 281-295. | **Online Response 13**  **Final Paper Due (BB)** |
| Chapter 7 (pp. 219-229)  Final Exam Q&A |  |
| Week 16  (05/12-05/18) | **In-class Final – May- 13** | | |